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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM: AMCONGEN, Lagos, Nigeria

NEA MESSAGE CENTER

DESP. NO. 170

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

DATE: January 26, 1953

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SUBJECT: Fortnightly Newsletter - January 12 - 24, 1953.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MD DATE 7/14/82
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POLITICAL

Widespread and Varied Reactions to Action Group "Non-Fraternization"

December 10, 1952 Benin resolution by Action Group to boycott all functions given by Governor continues bring reaction all quarters. NCNC says AG resolution too weak; NCNC resolution boycotts functions ALL British officials. Northern Ministers published condemnation boycott as "un-Nigerian" violation hospitality and attempt thwart God's will which made MacPherson Governor. Katsina Native Authority resolves that boycott detrimental march of Nigerian progress. AWOLOWO reiterates Governor has contempt for African ministers and boycott necessary — compares with Ghandi program in India. Leading Obas Western Region met with Governor and are asking AG leaders attempt iron out non-fraternization squabble. Secretary Lagos Branch AG published long article saying, in effect, AG policy none of North's business; non-fraternization old African custom; and God never imperialist, thus on side of AG—not Governor.

Northern House of Assembly in Session

Appropriation Bill first business of House, which began sitting January 16. Budget for coming year shows expected revenue £5,662,601 and expenditures £6,120,735. Members facing hard fact of necessity new revenues if want development or other new schemes. Special tax on benniseed (10 shillings per ton), peanuts (£1 per ton), cocoa, palm products and cotton proposed by Financial Secretary. Debate followed; bill will be stoutly opposed. Mohammadu RIBADU, central Minister of Natural Resources proposes tax on kola nuts and higher motor license tax. North badly in need development programs but short of money. Also expect motions to ban trading in out-stations and food trading by Syrians and Lebanese traders.

Western House

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Western House of Assembly in Session

Western budget calls for expenditures £6,027,470 and revenue of £6,259,820. Tax on races, movies, other entertainment passed. Bill for Western Region Local Government Law, 1952, returned for amendment before approval by Governor-in-Council. Major reason for rejection was clause "which would purport to enable the Executive Council to confer powers upon the Local Government Council greater than those held by the Executive Council itself." Deletion of the offending clause will allow approval. Other clauses will also be removed pending later restoration after passage in March of Central Legislation which will give them sanction they have not currently. Second reading of Bill for regulations to force pest and erosion control, and for other improved agricultural practises passed. Announced that 38% of Region's budget set for health schemes and education. Also proposed taxes on entertainments and motor vehicles. Region expects grant from central government to cover decrease in tobacco tax revenue and cost new salary increases. House expected to act on proposed bill implementing Lagos Executive Development Board town planning. Part of budget set aside for Coronation celebrations; prompting NCNC to inform all its House members not participate in planning or festivities for event. NCNC's Tony ENAHORO introduced motion asking Lieutenant-Governor appoint at least one woman member to House.

Eastern House of Assembly in Session

Proposed expenditure for next financial year in East is £4,803,140 and estimated revenue is £5m. One quarter of expenditure for education; over £½m for police; almost £3/4m for medical services.

NCNC Split Continues

No sign yet of eventual outcome of NCNC internal squabble. ZIK reported to have called National Executive Committee meeting for January 29 to consider political reshuffling consequent upon his dispute with NWAPA, ARIKPO and NJOKU, whose appeal probably will be heard at this meeting. If appeal rejected by NEC, ZIK must get 2/3 Eastern House favorable vote on recall motion to unseat the three from their Central Ministries. Conflicting reports cast doubt he can get the necessary votes. If successful (if and when attempted) probable successors would be: MBADIWE, ORIZU, E. O. EYO, or Dr. Udo UDOMA. Port Harcourt meeting of NCNC Executive Committee last October gave ZIK power to reshuffle East Cabinet whenever he finds it necessary. Accordingly, "Constitutionalists" Jaja WACHUKU, East Region Government Deputy

Leader, and

Leader, and Prof. Eyo ITA, East Region Minister for Public Health and Regional Leader of NCNC, may both find themselves replaced by NCNC'ers more amenable to ZIK's ideas on the Constitution.

Cameroons Restless

Cameroons separatism once more appears in reports that Working Committee of Cameroons National Federation will discuss on January 24 a proposal to table a motion in East House of Assembly asking creation of separate Cameroons House of Assembly with budgetary and legislative autonomy. Also an "All-Cameroons National Party" was proposed by Camerooniens resident at Enugu. Propose to replace or absorb existing organizations with similar aims to get better treatment than yet received from East House.

Zik Awarded £3,025 in Court Action Against Action Group Paper

Supreme Court at Ibadan orders Nigerian Tribune to pay £3,025 to ZIK as damages including costs in libel case. Appeal probable.

British Labour Party Delegation Departs

Former Colonial Secretary, James GRIFFITHS, led his three companions into Lagos from Port Harcourt on January 7. Toured widely in Lagos area, visited Ibadan briefly. Talked extensively with Ministers, department heads and other officials. Departed for Accra on 15th, having made farewell address couched in general terms lauding progress and achievements of Nigeria.

ECONOMIC

ASARCO Abandoning Activities at Abakaliki

American Smelting and Refining Co. discontinuing exploration activities at workings near Abakaliki, and contract with British syndicate and all activities to end March 20, 1953. Surface exploration lead-zinc deposits disappointing, and underground drillings indicate reserves not sufficient to warrant expenditure large sums of money which would be necessary to control water in workings and for development. Company hopes sell equipment to syndicate or other Nigerian-located firms.

Western Food Supplies Adequate

Western Region Minister Agriculture announced food supplies adequate this year. Claimed improvement due government's efforts stimulate production.

Standard Bank

Standard Bank Directors in Court

Aftermath of liquidation Nigerian-owned Standard Bank of Nigeria finds three directors in court. Charge: Stealing £1,000 cash and properties of bank worth additional thousand pounds. Witness also accused directors of taking large sums money "influence" truck agencies to sell him trucks.

Farmers' Bank in Supreme Court

Court announces will decide petition for compulsory liquidation bank before petition to re-constitute bank. Bank's creditors petitioned court to allow bank re-open after liquidation.

Labor Troubles in Mines and Railway

Coal miners still restive without recognized union. Special NCNC Labour Committee adding fuel to fire, accusing company of unfair dismissals. Efforts Enugu Council of Labour build new, stable miners union not successful. Railway union threatened strike if management did not pay overtime arrears. Few hours before deadline announcement of full payment made. Clerks now on record as wanting overtime pay as well, not provided for at present.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

West Announced 200 Scholarships

S. O. AWOKOYA, West Regional Education Minister, announces 200 scholarships awarded Western (Action Group) Government. Awards made on provincial basis: Abeokuta, 19; Colony, 21; Ibebu Ode, 29; Ibadan, 16; Oyo, 20; Ondo, 26; Benin, 38; Delta, 31. Number tenable in the United States yet undetermined.

Akpabio Suspension Opposed in Lagos

Move to oust Columbia-trained I. U. Akpabio from principalship of Ibibio State College because school failed win government approval opposed by West African Pilot and, reportedly, Lagos Abak and Ikot Ekpene elements Ibibio State Union. Oust-Akpabio move led by Dr. Edo UDOMA, Union president, NCNC, MHR and publisher of Eastern States Express. Indications are Zik fordes supporting Akpabio, needing his help in present internal party struggle. UDOMA seems to lean more and more toward Chuku NWAPA faction.

N. B. S. Using

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N. B. S. Using Women Announcers

Nigerian Broadcasting Service now training Nigeria women announcers for local program commentaries. Miss ALAYO, Yoroba, now handling USIS "Music From America" show.

Nigerian Asks to Study U. S., Canada Civil Service

S. O. ADEBO, senior Nigerian administrative officer and member Nigerianization commission, has applied for UN Fellowship to study civil service systems in U. S. and Canada.

Erwin P. Keeler
American Consul General

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